

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 4 - 13 are pending and under consideration. In the Office Action of September 16, 2003, claims 1 and 4 - 13 were rejected. Claim 1 has been amended to include the additional limitation of cancelled claim 3, and claim 13 has been cancelled.

The Examiner rejected claim 1 as being unpatentable over “conventional art” (Figs. 1A-C) in view of Tokuo (JP2000075295). Each of the other claims have been rejected under the “conventional art” and Tokuo, further in view of either Yamada (US 6,437,845), Kojima (US 5,650,867), Kume (US 6,330,049), or Yamamoto (EP 0886170A2). It is respectfully submitted that none of the “conventional art”, Yamada, Kojima, Kume, or Yamamoto references teaches a liquid crystal display where the liquid crystals in each of a plurality of small-sized areas are divided into four groups and are oriented symmetrically with respect to an axis perpendicular to a point of intersection of two diagonals lines of a rectangular area encircled by a wall structure, as required by claim 1. Nor is this feature obvious in light of any of the cited art either alone or in combination.

With respect to the feature added to claim 1 (taken from previously pending claim 3), the Examiner stated in the September 16, 2003 Office Action that this feature is disclosed in Fig. 2C of Yamada. However, as further explained in the specification of Yamada, Fig. 2C actually discloses that “the liquid crystal molecules 5a are aligned concentrically” rather than symmetrically. As explained in the Applicants’ specification, stating that the liquid crystal molecules in each of four groups are “oriented symmetrically with respect to an axis perpendicular to a point of intersection” of two diagonals lines means that “the liquid crystal molecules 16M are oriented in the vertical direction in the domains (1) and (3), while being oriented in the horizontal directions in the domains (2) and (4).” (Applicants’ Specification at p. 13, lns. 5-9). The claimed feature of “symmetrically oriented” liquid crystal molecules is not taught by the “concentrically” oriented molecules of Yamada, nor is this feature taught

by the other art cited by the Examiner. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that claim 1 is allowable over the prior art.

Pending claims 4 - 12 dependent from independent claim 1. Thus, for the same reason claim 1 is patentable over the cited references as discussed above, these dependent claims are likewise patentable over these references.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that pending claims 1 and 4 – 12 are patentable over the cited references. It is, therefore, submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. Notice to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,
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